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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 003047

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PM/WRA FOR BAKER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/29/2017

TAGS: PARM PREL NATO TU

SUBJECT: TURKEY SHARES USG CONCERNS ABOUT OSLO PROCESS, BUT
PLANS TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING

REF: STATE 164503

Classified By: Acting Pol-Mil Counselor Christopher Rich, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) We delivered reftel papers on December 17 to MFA Department Head for Arms Control and Disarmament Elif Ulgen, who was a member of the Turkish delegation to the Oslo Process meeting in Vienna on 5-7 December. Ulgen stated that, as a country with cluster munitions in its arsenal, Turkey shares many of the concerns raised in reftel papers. In particular, Turkey is concerned about the impact that the proposed Convention would have on NATO interoperability. Ulgen said the GOT agrees that the most appropriate channel to conduct negotiations on cluster munitions, and to strike a balance between humanitarian concerns and military requirements, is within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) framework.

¶2. (C) However, with all EU member states and over 130 countries participating in the Oslo Process, Ulgen said the GOT decided that it was necessary to have a seat at the table, even if it found some of the provisions in the discussion text that was circulated for the Vienna meeting problematic. Ulgen noted that the December meeting in Vienna was the first Oslo Process meeting to which Turkey was formally invited, and Turkey does not want to be seen as being isolated on the issue. Turkey is planning to send a delegation to the next meeting in Wellington, New Zealand on 18-22 February, 2008.

¶3. (C) Ulgen, who also serves as the coordinator for GOT efforts to fulfill its obligations under the Ottawa Convention, said Turkey is behind schedule in destroying its stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines, and had underestimated the costs of the process. In her estimation, based on Turkey's experience with the Ottawa Convention, the GOT would probably be disinclined to sign on to any other protocols in the near horizon that would call for the mandatory destruction of other types of weapons stockpiles. She also expressed confidence that the discussion text circulated for the Vienna meeting will be "diluted" before a final agreement can be reached among State Parties.

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